

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-5 and 7 are pending in the application. Claim 6 was previously canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. Claims 1 and 7 have been amended. No new matter is added.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,854,847 to Yoshida et al. (hereinafter “Yoshida”) in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0109575 to Thigpen (hereinafter “Thigpen”).

In view of the Examiner’s rejections Applicants have amended claim 1 to recite that the center speaker, L channel speaker, and R channel speaker are all configured to be mounted in the dashboard of the automobile. Support for this amendment can be found in the Specification ¶ 16 and Figure 1. Claim 1 has further been amended to clarify that the direction of the horizontal vibration axis and the direction of the vertical vibration axis of the L channel speaker and the R channel speaker are configured “so as to intersect with and direct sound toward a front glass of the automobile and then a side glass of the automobile.” Support for this amendment can be found in the Specification at ¶ 18 and Figure 1.

The Examiner contends that Figure 2 of Yoshida discloses a horizontal vibration axis of the L channel speaker and R channel speaker “across the vehicle from side-to-side.” (Detailed Action, item 2, page 4). The Examiner further contends that Thigpen discloses “a vertical vibration axis at an incline of a prescribed angle . . . to intersect with and direct sound from a front glass of said automobile.” (Detailed Action, item 2, page 5). However, as amended, claim 1 recites:

an L channel cone type speaker . . . configured to be disposed within the dashboard of the automobile . . . and having a horizontal vibration axis in a direction pivoted counterclockwise from a forward direction of motion of said automobile and a vertical vibration axis directed at an incline of a prescribed angle in the direction of motion of said automobile **so as to intersect with and direct sound toward a front glass of the automobile and then a side glass of the automobile.**

Claim 1 has been similarly amended with respect to the R channel speaker. Applicants submit that neither Yoshida nor Thigpen, singly or in combination, disclose angling the L channel and R channel speaker so as to reflect the sound off the front window of the automobile and then the side window of the automobile, as recited by claim 1 and illustrated in Figure 1 of the present application.

Applicants further submit that the combination of Yoshida and Thigpen would not result in the configuration recited by claim 1. Yoshida discloses L channel and R channel speakers that are directed at the occupant such that the sound generated by those speakers is directly received by the driver or passenger. Specifically, Figure 2 of Yoshida illustrates speakers mounted in front of the driver and passenger that are directed toward the occupants, and Figure 3 of Yoshida illustrates speakers mounted on the side of the driver and the passenger that are directed toward the occupants. Yoshida does not disclose reflecting the sound of the L channel or R channel off any surface toward the occupants. Thigpen merely discloses reflecting the sound of the L channel and R channel off the front window. Neither Thigpen nor Yoshida disclose or suggest reflecting sound from the L channel or R channel speaker off the side windows of the automobile, much the less reflecting the sound "toward a front glass of the automobile and then a side glass of the automobile" as recited by claim 1.

Moreover, both Yoshida and Thigpen locate the L channel and R channel speakers on the left and right side, respectively, of the occupants of the automobile. Thus, both Yoshida and

Thigpen can direct the left and right channel sound toward the occupant directly or by reflecting the sound off the front window. Neither reference discloses directing L channel sound generated near the center of the automobile toward the left side of the occupant and directing R channel sound generated near the center of the automobile toward the right side of the occupant. However, the configuration of the claimed invention achieves this result. Thus, neither Yoshida nor Thigpen disclose or suggest the configuration of the claimed invention or even the problems solved by the claimed invention.

Applicants further submit that none of the other references cited by the Examiner disclose or suggest the features of claim 1 demonstrated above to be missing from Yoshida and Thigpen. Thus, Claim 1 is not obvious in view of the cited prior art and is patentable over the combination of Yoshida and Thigpen.

Claims 2, 3 and 5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yoshida in view of Thigpen in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,519,344 to Yajima et al. (hereinafter “Yajima”). Claim 4 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yoshida in view of Thigpen in further view of Yajima in further view of U.S. Patent No. 5,764,777 to Goldfarb (hereinafter “Goldfarb”).

Claims 2-5 depend from claim 1. Applicants submit that neither Yajima nor Goldfarb disclose the features of claim 1 demonstrated above to be missing from Yoshida and Thigpen. Thus, at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 1, claims 1-5 are patentable over the combination of cited references.

Claim 7 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yoshida in view of Yajima in further view of Thigpen.

Claim 7 has been amended to similarly recite the features of claim 1 discussed above with respect to Yoshida and Thigpen. Applicants submit that Yajima does not cure the deficiencies of the combination of Yoshida and Thigpen, discussed with respect to claim 1.

Thus, for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1, claim 7 is patentable over the combination of Yoshida, Yajima and Thigpen.

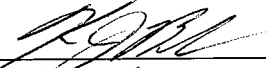
CONCLUSION

Each and every point raised in the Final Office Action dated October 14, 2008 has been addressed on the basis of the above amendments and remarks. In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below if the Examiner believes any issue can be resolved through either a Supplemental Response or an Examiner's Amendment.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 
Kevin J. Beach

Registration No.: 60,422
DARBY & DARBY P.C.
P.O. Box 770
Church Street Station
New York, New York 10008-0770
(212) 527-7700
(212) 527-7701 (Fax)
Attorneys/Agents For Applicant